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ABSTRACT

Prior to April 1993, the educational system in South Africa consisted of five separate departments of education. The Department of Education and Training (DET) governed education for the 10 black groups, excluding independent states and self-governing states. This paper describes the DET's inservice training policy for senior personnel, particularly the Top-Down Program and the Farm School Program. In the Top-Down Program, school inspectors trained group facilitators, who then trained principals. The program consisted of a core curriculum, coaching, and development of everyday competencies. In a questionnaire administered to 38 principals, a majority of respondents reported that the program had helped them improve their planning, organizational, leadership, and supervisory skills. The Farm School Program was a national program for the education of rural black children. Farm-school management was the joint responsibility of the DET and the farm owner. The aims of the Farm School Management and Teacher Development Project were to improve the professional skills and competencies of farm-school principals and teachers, and to uplift the educational experiences of farm school pupils. An evaluation of the project indicated that it and the Top-Down Program were up to standard and innovative. Three tables and one figure are included. Contains 15 references. (LMI)

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THE MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT OF BLACK SCHOOL PRINCIPALS: A SOUTH AFRICAN EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT

This paper indicates the Department of Education and Training's (for blacks) acceptance of the policy of inservice training of senior personnel, especially regarding management skills through the **Top-down programme** and the **Farm school programme**. One characteristic of these programmes is that each sub-programme has as resource book and a workbook. The resource book contains learning material and instructions. The workbook is used for answering questions and making comments. The facilitator (presenter of the programme) uses a guide which has very specific instructions on times and procedures. Other teaching aids used in the programmes are wall charts, video and audio cassettes, clue cards, and various management games. Furthermore the programmes will be discussed, and finally it will be shown what the effect (empirically determined) of the programmes are on the management skills of school principals as compared to the effect of other programmes. Finally the conclusion will be drawn that these programmes is experienced extremely positively by the black school principals as regards the improvement of management skills and the handling of the different management areas. Examples of these programmes will be made available

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THE MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT OF BLACK SCHOOL PRINCIPALS: A SOUTH AFRICAN EXPERIENCE

1. INTRODUCTION

In spite of motions requesting only one education system for South Africa, there are, at this stage, five major state departments of education within the South African educational context, each with its own political head as follows:

- Department of National Education - for general education policy
- Department of Education and Training (DET) - for Blacks
- Department of Education and Culture, Administration: House of Assembly - for Whites
- Department of Education and Culture, Administration: House of Representatives - for Coloureds
- Department of Education and Culture, Administration: House of Delegates - for Indians.

In this paper the focus will be specifically on the management development programmes for school principals in the Department of Education and Training (DET).

Principals in urban black schools have staffs which range in size from as few as ten to as many as 50 members. In a large school, the principal is assisted by a deputy principal and as many as six heads of departments. In a small school, the principal is assisted by one or two heads of departments. There are also clerks and labourers to be managed.

The need for management development of principals in the Department of Education and Training (DET) has always existed, especially because assistant teachers were promoted to principals' posts without any managerial experience and without an in-service management development programme within the department. In 1982 the DET started compiling a comprehensive series of lectures which was aimed at principals, deputy principals and heads of departments. The series of lectures was entitled 'School Management'. The aim of the lectures was to acquaint managers with the rules, regulations, systems and procedures, and also to inform them about supplementary services within the DET. The series of lectures was presented to school managers during 1982.

In 1984 the DET felt that a number of the problems encountered in the day-to-day operation of schools could be reduced if managers received training that resulted in an improvement in performance (Top-Down No. 1, 1984:1).

The DET requested that the Performance and Educational Services (Pty) Ltd. (PES), a subsidiary of African Oxygen Ltd., to work out a process for the management development of principals in DET's service (Anon., 1985a:1). PES (now called HPS - Human Performance Systems) designed a special training programme, the greatest feature of which is the Top-Down, for all the managers within the DET.

Litterer (1969:388) contends that the failure or success of an organization (i.e. school) depends on the quality of its management. In the case of the black school principal, the quality of management was questionable because, as Dale (1978:33) states, principals are sometimes promoted to the post because of their expertise in one particular field only. Dale (1978:33) refers to a chief executive, but in the case of the DET, this is applicable to the school principal who has been promoted precisely because of his expertise as a good subject/class teacher only (Fields & Carrick, 1986:17; Jones & Godfrey, 1986:20-21). Such a principal feels that he has been literally thrown in at the deep end. He does not have the management know-how to run a school effectively. It is at this point that the PES comes into the picture to develop the principals as effective and efficient managers (Top-Down No. 1, 1984:18).

But do Top-Downs achieve their objective of developing effective and efficient managers? The answer is both 'yes' and 'no'. The Top-Downs meet their objective in that they develop confidence in principals by bringing about an awareness of the areas to be managed and suggesting methods and strategies for the management of those areas. This alone is a major plus-factor, as confidence is an essential factor in the make-up of a principal. As Dale (1978:11) states, no-one can handle the management function successfully unless he is familiar with what he is managing.

Top-Downs also describe the goals of the DET explicitly as including well-balanced children; young adults capable of making a community contribution; satisfied and involved parents and community; and young adults able to compete in an open and free labour market offering equal opportunities and good scholastic results (Anon., 1985a:1). With these as a starting point, the hierarchical structure of the Top-Down process makes it possible for these goals to be operationalized into objectives at the lower management levels (Carrol & Tosi, 1973:56).

2. METHODS OF MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

Various methods are used for the management development of principals. Some of the methods are used in and others outside the school. According to a literature study the following methods have been identified:

- Staff and parents meetings
- Communicating with the staff, pupils and parents
- Official visits by departmental officials e.g. checklist ET 480 and ET 481
- Courses
- Official seminars and conferences
- Further studies
- Teachers' centres

3. DET'S SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COURSES

In 1982 the DET embarked upon a mammoth in-service training programme called 'School Management'. It was aimed at principals, deputy principals and heads of departments. Twenty school management lectures were produced by head-office, and head-office personnel presented the lectures to principals and professional staff of the circuits. The presenters moved from region to region exposing the principals to the contents of the programme. It was left to the circuit staff to present and arrange for the presentation of the programme to those whom head-office staff could not reach. These included some principals, deputy principals and heads of departments.

The main aim of the programme was to make top management in the schools aware of departmental policy, regulations and circulars. It was also intended to make managers aware of responsibilities, duties and areas of accountability. The programme was aimed at informing the course attendants.

Some of the lectures which are relevant to the topic under discussion are the following:

- Lecture 2: The place in the community and the school as a functional unit.
- Lecture 5: Staff development and utilization
- Lecture 6: General subject guidance with a view to overall control

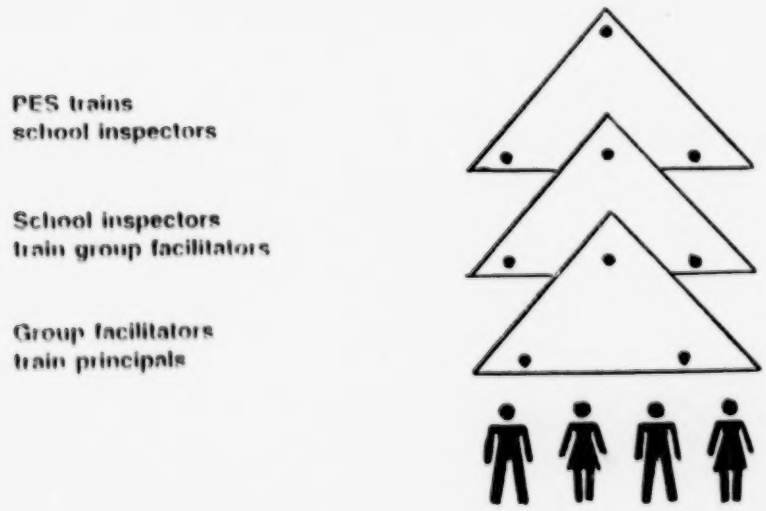
- Lecture 9: Evaluation
- Lecuture 12: Provisioning
- Lecture 13: Directives for the implementation of in-service training and retraining teachers

4. TOP-DOWNS AS A MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR PRINCIPALS

The personnel in management posts who are trained and developed are the directors, deputy-directors, assistant directors, circuit inspectors, principals, deptuty-principals, and heads of departments.

The PES co-ordinator in the region presents the Top-Down to the director and deputy-directors. One of the deputy-directors presents the Top-Down to the assistant directors. The assistant directors in turn pass on the Top-Down to circuit inspectors. The circuit inspectors then present the programme to principals who, in turn, pass it on to deputy-principals and heads of departments. This is the 'Top-Down' programme. This method is called the delivery system (Figure 1) through the cascaded training approach.

FIGURE 1 DELIVERY SYSTEMS



The fundamental reason behind the introduction of the Top-Down programme was that many principals did not have effective management skills (Anon., 1985b:1). The principals did not have these skills because, firstly, most of the principals were previously ordinary assistants who did well as class or subject teachers. Secondly, the teacher-training courses available to DET teachers concentrated on training students as teachers only and the syllabi made no provision for school management courses for principals. Thirdly, no structured induction course or in-service training programme for newly appointed principals existed. The management programmes that existed were not run on a regular basis and many principals did not get any guidance at all. As a consequence, many principals who did not have a natural aptitude for management could not perform well.

In a response to this situation, the DET engaged PES to work out a programme that would improve the management ability of principals (Anon., 1987:26). PES believes that even with the best schools, teachers and resources, no correct outputs can be realized unless all inputs are effectively managed (Anon., 1985b:2).

One characteristic of the Top-Down is that each Top-Down has resource book and a workbook. The resource book contains learning material and instructions. The workbook is used for answering questions and making comments. The facilitator (presenter of Top-Down) uses a guide which has very specific instructions concerning times and procedures. He informs the course attendants where to read in the resource book and when to answer in the workbook. He also leads discussions of responses and comments.

Other teaching aids used in Top-Down are wallcharts, video and audio cassettes, clue cards and various management games. Cases studies and role-play are also used.

5. TOP-DOWN PROGRAMME

The Top-Down programme has three distinct sections, namely, the core programme, the informal Top-Down, and the formal Top-Down.

The core programme is the initial training programme that introduces the course attendants to the training methods of the whole programme. It has five units and is presented over a period of four days. The five units are:

- Unit 1: Your management development system
- Unit 2: Effective management in the DET

- Unit 3: Informal management system
- Unit 4: The formal management system
- Unit 5: The DET's policy towards management development

The informal Top-Down is done via coaching. Coaching is described as a process through which the manager transfers knowledge, skills, attitudes and standards to his subordinates. It is orally done and can take place anywhere (Core Programme, 1984, Unit 3:1-9).

The formal Top-Down originally consisted of eight programmes and was intended to develop competencies and skills which principals need in the everyday performance of their duties. These Top-Downs were:

- Top-down no. 1: Self-management
- Top-down no. 2: Managing subordinate outputs
- Top-down no. 3: Managing buildings and physical assets
- Top-down no. 4: Managing parent and community involvement
- Top-down no. 5: Managing conflict in shools
- Top-down no. 6: Managing methods and procedures
- Top-down no. 7: Managing your team
- Top-down no. 8: Nurturing student development

Later, an additional three programmes were developed. These Top-Downs were:

- Top-down no. 9: Classroom management (a management programme for teachers)
- Top-down no. 10: Decision-making and problem-solving in school
- Top-down no. 11: Self-renewal school.

6. DETERMINING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE TOP-DOWN PROGRAMME

Through a questionnaire sent to school principals (n=38) the effectiveness of the Top-Down programme and the impact it had on the improvement of management skills were determined by Van der Westhuizen and Makhokolo (1991).

Firstly the contribution of the Top-Down programme to the improvement of the management tasks of the school principal was determined. The evaluation of the Top-Down by the respondents was very favourable (Table 1).

TABLE 1 CONTRIBUTION OF THE TOP-DOWNS TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE MANAGEMENT TASKS

TASKS	RESPONSES: MUCH AND VERY MUCH*
Planning	75,8 %
Organising	73,5 %
Leading	75,0 %
Controlling	83,8 %

* *The responses none and little are not reported in Tables 1, 2 and 3.*

Secondly, the respondents evaluated the Top-Down very favourable concerning its contribution to the development of the management areas (Table 2). The respondents learnt how to delegate duties, manage physical assets, initiate and manage parent involvement and other skills covered by the Top-Down. The respondents found relevance in all the Top-Downs and have personalized the experience described in the Top-Downs.

TABLE 2 CONTRIBUTION OF THE TOP-DOWNS TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE MANAGEMENT AREAS

AREAS	RESPONSES: MUCH AND VERY MUCH
Pupils	69,7 %
Staff	78,8 %
Parents	68,7 %
Physical assets and procedures	63,6 %
Finances	56,1 %

From the data (Tables 1 and 2) it can be derived that the respondents viewed the Top-Down as the programme which most improved their skills in the performance of all the management tasks and all but one management area namely, finances.

In comparing the Top-Downs to other programmes (Table 3), the other programmes were placed far below Top-Down by the respondents. Discussions with DET officials were placed in a poor second position for their effectiveness in improving performing skills. The most ineffectual programme, according to respondents, was that of attendance or seminar. Table 3 gives the score in order of merit.

TABLE 3 CONTRIBUTION OF THE TOP-DOWNS IN COMPARISON WITH OTHER MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

PROGRAMMES	CONTRIBUTION TO MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT
Top-downs	62,3 %
Discussion with DET officials	28,7 %
Management develop-ment cources	23,3 %
Addresses	18,2 %
Teachers' centre	12,8 %
Formal studies	11,4 %
Courses and seminars	9,0 %

7. THE FARM SCHOOL PROJECT

7.1 BACKGROUND

A comprehensive report on the provision of education for rural black children released in July 1987 confirms the Government's commitment to the creation of equal opportunities for all in South Africa. Among the many recommendations are the following (DET, 1989):

- A national plan for the development of rural education.
- A major 3-year management and teacher development programme for all 12 000 farm school principals and teachers.

The aims of the Farm School Management and Teacher Development Project were to provide farm school principals and their teachers with some of the management and professional skills and competencies needed to uplift and improve the educational experiences of farm school pupils (Campbell, 1991:323).

According to Cambell (1991), there are 5349 farm schools in South Africa, making up 73 per cent of all DET schools. The management of farm schools is the joint responsibility of the DET and the officially appointed school manager (who usually is the farm manager/owner). The **DET** is responsible for monitoring the standard of teaching in the schools, supplying equipment, furniture, textbooks and stationery, and for paying teachers' salaries. The **school manager/farm owner** donates the land, builds the classrooms with a financial subsidy from the government, and appoints and terminates the service of teachers. On the other hand, the **school principal** manages the everyday affairs of the school and also has his teaching duties (Campbell, 1991:323-324).

7.2 THE CORE PROGRAMME

The core programme has four sub-units which reveal some differences from the Top-Down programme. Dachs (1989:12) remarks that the narrower focus of this programme allows for closer focusing and more relevant and realistic, context-specific examples.

The formal modules originally consisted of 6 programmes, while a further 4 modules were prepared in 1989. These modules are:

- Module 1: Managing yourself
- Module 2: Managing parent and community involvement
- Module 3: Teaching of combined classes
- Module 4: Use of the environment as a resource
- Module 5: Teaching methods and techniques
- Module 6: Classroom climate and effective learning.

The development and presentation of the Farm School Programme is the same as that of the Top-Down programme.

According to Cambell (1991:337-338), the Farm School Programme has had some distinct benefits:

- It has reached over 5 300 inspectors and principals without them being absent from school for more than a day at a time.

- They were trained in each module over a period of not more than 12 weeks

- Inspectors and group facilitators acted as tutors in the training process

- In the programme, a participative management philosophy and open-ended discussion type activities were followed. This method encouraged the learner to make sense of his own management experiences, and to learn from other participants as well from the text.

At this stage the outcomes and effectiveness of the Farm School Programme has been evaluated by Calitz and Breytenbach (1990). They found that the Farm School project (as well as the Top-Downs) were excellent, innovative and were up to standard and that the cascaded training approach was excellent undertaken.

8. THE FUTURE

The DET placed a tender (No. RT4578 SF) on 14 June 1991 requesting proposals from consultants to make specific suggestions concerning how management development and performance improvement could best be achieved in its regions. HPS - Human Performance Systems (previously PES) is one of approximately ten tenders for the contract.

The problem areas and expected outputs of the DET have been identified in the tender document. The service required by the DET consists of two main components, ie:

1. A **Development Plan** to rectify the identified shortcomings in the following performance areas:

   - the management of staff development

   - pupil support and community involvement

   - educational administration.

2. A **Monitoring System** for managing the performance of its institutions, offices and subject advisory services, as well as the level of subject competency.

   A tender proposal could be accepted for any part of, or the total contract.

9. IN CONCLUSION

According to the data, most respondents attributed their improved skills in the performance of the various management tasks and the handling of the different management areas to Top-Down (in this sense, also the Farm School Programme). In evaluating Top-Down, the respondents also favoured the Top-Down programme, rating it, on average, as having improved their skills from 'much' to 'very much'.

In this paper, the Department of Education and Training's (DET) acceptance of the policy of in-service training of senior personnel, especially regarding management skills, was indicated. Furthermore, the Top-Down as well as the Farm School programmes were discussed and the effect of the Top-Down programme on the management skills of school principals was determined in comparison to the effect of other programmes. The conclusion can now be drawn that the Top-Down programme (and therefore also the Farm School Programme) was experienced extremely positively as regards the improvement of management skills and the handling of the different management areas.

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